

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

April 29, 2003

RE: MDR Tracking #: M2-03-0300-01
IRO Certificate #: IRO4326

The ____ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission (TWCC) has assigned the above referenced case to ____ for independent review in accordance with TWCC Rule §133.308 which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

____ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. In performing this review, relevant medical records, any documents utilized by the parties referenced above in making the adverse determination, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the appeal was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a ____ physician reviewer who is board certified in neurosurgery which is the same specialty as the treating physician. The ____ physician reviewer has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to the referral to ____ for independent review. In addition, the reviewer has certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party to this case.

Clinical History

This patient sustained a work-related injury on ____ when he apparently injured his lower back. The patient was treated with facet injections and on 06/11/02 he underwent an L1-S1 bilateral radio frequency facet neurotomy. The physician has recommended that the patient undergo the second stage of the radio frequency facet neurotomy.

Requested Service(s)

Lumbar radio frequency facet neurotomy

Decision

It is determined that the lumbar radio frequency facet neurotomy is not medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

Repetition of a lumbar radio frequency facet neurotomy at nine to twelve months after the initial procedures falls within accepted medical practice. However, this procedure cannot be justified unless the patient response to the initial procedure was so beneficial that nearly complete pain relief was obtained from the initial procedure or that the relief was sufficient to dramatically change the patient lifestyle and activities of daily living in a positive manner. The medical record documentation lacks evidence of this degree of pain relief. Therefore, the lumbar radio frequency facet neurotomy is not medically necessary.

This decision by the IRO is deemed to be a TWCC decision and order.

YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING

Either party to this medical dispute may disagree with all or part of the decision and has a right to request a hearing.

If disputing a spinal surgery prospective decision a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **10** (10) days of your receipt of this decision (20 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5 (c)).

If disputing other prospective medical necessity (preauthorization) decisions a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **20** (twenty) days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin Code 148.3).

This Decision is deemed received by you 5 (five) days after it was mailed (28 Tex. Admin Code 102.4(h) or 102.5(d)). A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, P.O. Box 40669, Austin, Texas, 78704-0012. **A copy of this decision should be attached to the request.**

The party appealing the decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute (Commission Rule 133.308 (t)(2)).

Sincerely,

In accordance with Commission Rule 102.4 (h), I hereby verify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) Decision was sent to the carrier, the requestor and claimant via facsimile or U.S. Postal Service from the office of the IRO on this 29 th day of April 2003.
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